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### EVST 450.01: Food, Agriculture and Environment

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**EVST 450: FOOD, AGRICULTURE, AND ENVIRONMENT**  
**SPRING 2007**  
**TUES. AND THURS., 2:10-3:30**  
**RANKIN HALL 203**

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Office Hours: Wed. 1:30 – 3:00, Fri. 11:00 –12:00. Please sign up for a spot at office door, or make an appointment if these times do not work for you.

**Purpose of the Course:** According to Wendell Berry, “eating is an agricultural act.” While food is central to our lives, most of us know very little about how the food we eat each day is produced or how it reaches our plates. This course seeks to help fill that gap. Overall, the purpose is to introduce you to some of the contemporary issues in the study of food and agriculture in the U.S. and to demonstrate an approach to broad, interdisciplinary study and practice. We will look at the conditions created by the dominant, “industrial” food and agricultural system, as well as investigate emerging alternatives – such as “sustainable agriculture,” “organic farming,” and “local food systems.” We will also find out about the current proposals and debates surrounding the federal Farm Bill of 2007. The final section of the course will give us an opportunity to learn about the role of gardens in the lives of different ethnic groups in the US. In addition to engaging with a broad set of readings, you will also have the opportunity to improve your research, communication, organizing, and presentation skills through a final research paper or an action-oriented project,

**Readings:** A proposed “menu” (sorry, I just can’t resist!) of the readings is attached. The texts are available at the bookstore:

Klindienst, Patricia. 2006. *The Earth Knows My Name: Food, Culture, and Sustainability in the Gardens of Ethnic Americans*. Beacon Press.

Lyson, Thomas. 2004. *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community*. Medford, MA: Tufts University Press.

Schlosser, Eric. 2002. *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*. New York: Perennial/Harper Collins Publishers.

On order, due out in March (substitutions may have to be made):

Imhoff, Daniel and Roberto Carra. 2007. *Food Fight: A Citizen's Guide to the Farm Bill*. University of California Press.

All of the other materials listed on this syllabus are on both traditional and electronic reserve in Mansfield Library. You may want to go over and copy all of the materials on traditional reserve at the start of the course so that you have them easily available to you. Access electronic reserve at:

<http://www.lib.umt.edu> **The password is: EVST450 (all caps required!).**

**REQUIREMENTS**

**Class Participation and Attendance:** One of your main tasks in this course is to do each assigned reading thoughtfully before class and then to help us discuss it in class. To do this effectively, I encourage you to jot down a few notes to yourself as you read. These notes might include questions you

have or points you want to bring up for discussion. Although you will not be required to turn this material in to me, please be aware that the vibrancy and depth of our discussions depends a great deal on how well prepared you are.

I expect you to attend class consistently because if you are not in class you cannot benefit from hearing the discussion of the material, nor can you contribute to the group's learning together.

I understand that active participation in class discussions is not easy for everyone, but I encourage you to give it a try! I may choose to give you a little extra credit at the end if you have been an active and thoughtful participant in class. Please treat each other with respect when expressing your views and help us to create space so that everyone has a chance to speak.

**Analytic Essays:** The course is divided into three sections. To help you think critically about what you read and to synthesize the material, you will write three sets of analytic essays during the term (see attached schedule).

These papers should be five pages, typed, and double-spaced with normal margins and fonts. I expect these papers to be well organized, grammatically correct, and completely referenced. Although I encourage you to discuss your ideas with your colleagues, these papers must be produced individually. I will distribute the question(s) that I want you to cover about ten days before the essays are due. More specific guidance on these papers will be distributed at that time.

**Late Papers:** If you do not turn in the essays on time for whatever reason, you can turn it in as much as one week later – but no later than that – for three fewer points than it would have received had it been on time. This option is not available for the final term papers and projects described below.

**Term Papers or Projects:** Either individually or in a small team, you will research a topic or engage in a project related to food and/or agriculture. The term papers or projects provide an opportunity for you to delve more deeply into a topic that interests you. Your work might take the form of a more traditional term paper for which you conduct research on a topic you want to learn more about. Or you might do a more action-oriented project. Much more will be said about these papers/projects in class. You will report your findings in presentations, papers and other products due at the end of the term.

**Term papers:** Undergraduates will produce term papers that are 15 pages in length. Graduate students will produce papers that are about 20 pages long.

**Projects:** These projects are intended to give you an opportunity to engage in action or service related to the food system. Past examples include: creating a community garden in Superior; comparing the ingredients in a strawberry sundae from two ice cream parlors and the distance those ingredients traveled to reach Missoula; reinvigorating the ASUM community garden; a vermiculture project (worm composting) at the PEAS farm; developing a curriculum about the local food system for use with middle school students; and educating the community about the campus composting project at UM dining services.

Unless you and I agree on an alternative plan, projects are typically reported on through an annotated portfolio that presents your work. Portfolios include a description of your project, details on your activities, and any materials that were generated as a result of the work (e.g., maps, factsheets, photos, and curricula). Portfolios must include a 2 to 3 page reflection paper about what you learned in the course of doing your work (e.g., What were your successes? How did you push yourself? What challenges did you encounter? What would you do differently next time? What are your take home lessons?). When projects are conducted in teams, each student should write their own reflection paper on the process.

**Paper/Project Proposals:** In a two to three page proposal due on **Tuesday, Feb. 13**, please:

- (1) identify a specific research question or project;
- (2) discuss briefly why you think it is significant;
- (3) describe what you will do to answer the question of interest and/or what specific tasks you might engage in if your project is more action-oriented;
- (4) if you are working in a team, sketch out the division of labor among team members; and
- (5) include a preliminary bibliography of at least 5 sources.

The more specific you are in your proposal, the more helpful I can be in giving you feedback. I am happy to help you think about topics and methodologies, so please contact me during my office hours.

**Presentations:** During the last few weeks of the semester, you will also make a short, formal presentation on your research/project to the class. Be creative!

**Final papers are due Tuesday May 8 at the start of the final exam period.**

**Graduate students:** I will generally expect a greater level of theoretical and methodological sophistication from graduate students in their papers.

**Grading:**

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>
➤ Class Participation (i.e., attendance, contributions to class discussions, leadership)	30
➤ Three analytic Essays (0-15 points each)	45
➤ Term Papers	
• Final Presentations	5
• Final Projects	20

Thus, there are a total of 100 possible points. I will assign final letter grades using the plus/minus grading system.

**A note on plagiarism:** Academic honesty and integrity are essential. The student code of conduct expressly forbids plagiarism, which is the representation of another person's work as your own. It will not be tolerated in this course, and any student whom I suspect of plagiarizing will be subject to the procedures and consequences described in the student conduct code.

**Advising:** If I can be of assistance, please come see me during my office hours (or by appointment only if the office hours are impossible for you).

**Guest Speakers:** Several guest speakers may be added as appropriate.

**Optional Activities:** If there is sufficient interest among the members of the class, we may want to organize a field trip and/or a potluck.

**COURSE MENU**  
**Subject to Change**

**Tues., Jan. 23 – What’s on Our Plate?**

**AGRARIANISM, INDUSTRIALIZATION, AND GLOBALIZATION**

**Thurs., Jan. 25 – A Brief Look at US Agricultural Development**

Kingsolver, Barbara. 2003. A good farmer. *The Nation* 277(14):11-18.

Lyson – Chapters 1 and 2 in *Civic Agriculture* (pages 1-29)

**Tues., Jan. 30 – Agrarianism and Industrialization**

Berry, Wendell. 1984. Whose head is the farmer using? Whose head is using the farmer? Pp. 19 –30 (Chapter 2) in *Meeting the Expectations of the Land: Essays in Sustainable Agriculture and Stewardship*, edited by Wes Jackson, Wendell Berry, and Bruce Colman. San Francisco: North Point Press.

Berry, Wendell. 2001. The whole horse. Pp. 63-79 in *The New Agrarianism: Land, Culture, and the Community of Life*, edited by Eric T. Freyfogle. Washington: Island Press.

Deumling, Diana, Mathis Wackernagel, and Chad Monfreda. 2003. Eating up the Earth: How sustainable food systems shrink our ecological footprint. Redefining Progress. Retrieved from: [www.redefiningprogress.org](http://www.redefiningprogress.org).

**Thurs., Feb. 1 – Food, Concentration, and the Global Political Economy**

Lyson – Chapters 3 and 4 in *Civic Agriculture* (pages 30-60)

**Tues., Feb. 6 – Agricultural Biotechnology: The Brave New World is Here.**

**Guest lecture by Kristina (“Kiki”) Hubbard**

Cummings, Claire Hope. 2005. Trespass. *World Watch Magazine*, January/February:24-35.

Hubbard, Kiki. 2007. Commentary. KUFM Radio. January. 2 pages.

**Thurs., Feb. 8 – Fast Food Nation**

Schlosser – Introduction and Chapters 1 through 3 (pages 1 – 58)

**Tues., Feb. 13 – Fast Food Nation . PAPER/PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE**

Schlosser – Chapters 4 through 6 (pages 59 – 148)

**Thurs., Feb. 15 – Fast Food Nation**

Schlosser – Chapters 7 through 9 (pages 149 – 224)

**Tues., Feb. 20 –Fast Food Nation**

Schlosser – Chapter 10, Epilogue and Afterword (pages 225-288)

**Thurs., Feb. 22 –ESSAY(S) #1 DUE**

## **TRANSFORMING THE FOOD SYSTEM**

### **Tues., Feb. 27 – An Introduction and Overview**

Lyson – Chapters 5 in *Civic Agriculture* (pages 61-83).

Sligh, Michael. 2002. Organics at the crossroads: The past and the future of the organic movement. Pp. 272-282 in *The Fatal Harvest Reader: The Tragedy of Industrial Agriculture*, edited by Andrew Kimbrell. Washington: Island Press.

### **Thurs., Mar. 1 – Organic Agriculture: Yesterday and Today.**

Scowcroft, Bob. 2006. The organic conversation begins anew (again). *GreenMoney Journal* 15(2). Retrieved on 1.15.06 from [www.ofrf.org](http://www.ofrf.org). 3 pages.

Lipson, Elaine. 2004. Food, farming...feminism? Why going organic makes good sense. *Ms. Magazine*. Summer. Retrieved on 1.15.07 from: <http://www.ms magazine.com/summer2004/organicfarming.asp>

Halweil, Brian. 2006. Can organic farming feed us all? *World Watch Magazine* May/June: 18-24.

### **Tues., Mar. 6 – Organic Varieties**

Masumoto, David Mas. 1999. Learning to fail. Pp. 191-200 in *At Home on the Earth: Becoming Native to Our Place, A Multicultural Reader*, edited by David Landis Barnhill. Berkeley: UC Press.

Mello, Felicia. 2006. Hard labor: For farmworkers, it's not easy being organic. *The Nation* 283(7):21-28.

Featherstone, Liza. 2006. Mean or green? Wal-Mart's organic turn divides the movement. *The Nation* 283(7):31-34.

Redmond, LaDonna. 2004. Creating local food options in an urban setting. *The New Farm*. Nov. 9. Retrieved on 1.15.07 from: [http://www.newfarm.org/features/1104/urban\\_farm/](http://www.newfarm.org/features/1104/urban_farm/)

### **Thurs., Mar. 8 – Community Food Systems**

Lyson – Chapters 6 and 7 in *Civic Agriculture* (pages 61-105).

Henderson, Elizabeth. 2000. Rebuilding local food systems from the grassroots up. Pp. 175-188 in *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food, and the Environment*, edited by Fred Magdoff, John Bellamy Foster, and Frederick H. Buttel. NY: Monthly Review Press.

### **Tues., Mar. 13 – Farm-to-Cafeteria Programs**

Valliantos, Mark, Robert Gottlieb, and Margaret Ann Haase. 2004. Farm-to-school: Strategies for urban health, combating sprawl, and establishing a community food system approach. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 23:414-423.

Hassanein, et al. 2006. Summary. Tracing the chain: An in-depth look at the University of Montana's Farm to College Program. National Center for Appropriate Technology's Grow Montana Project.

McLeay, Fraser and Nicola Baron. 2006. Executive Summary. Unlocking the food buying potential of Montana's Public Institutions: Toward a Montana-based food economy. National Center for Appropriate Technology's Grow Montana Project.

**Thurs., Mar. 15 – The 2007 Farm Bill**  
To Be Announced

**Tues., Mar. 20 – The 2007 Farm Bill**  
To Be Announced

**Thurs., Mar. 22 – The 2007 Farm Bill**  
To Be Announced

### **SPRING BREAK**

### **III. THE FARM BILL**

**Tues., Apr. 3 – The 2007 Farm Bill**  
To Be Announced

**Thurs., Apr. 5 – ESSAY(S) #2 DUE**

**Tues., Apr. 10 – The Earth Knows My Name**  
Klindienst – pages xiii – 101

**Thurs., Apr. 12 – The Earth Knows My Name**  
Klindienst – pages 103 – 190

**Tues., Apr. 17 – The Earth Knows My Name**  
Klindienst – pages 191 – 246

**Thurs., Apr. 19 – Work Session and a Primer on Presentations**

**Tues., Apr. 24 – ESSAY(S) #3 DUE**

**Thurs., Apr. 26 – Presentations**

**Tues., May 1 – Presentations**

**Thurs., May 3 – Presentations. Wrapping up the leftovers to take home.**

**Tues., May 8, 1:10-3:10 – Presentations. FINAL PROJECTS AND PAPERS DUE.** This is our final exam period. There will be no final exam; however, we will continue with final presentations if necessary.